

## IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

As a voting U.S. citizen, I am most concerned about the likelihood of the FCC relaxing its rules for media ownership. Allowing one company to own newspapers, radio and television stations within the same service area can only narrow the diversity of information and perspectives we proudly associate with the ideals of America.

To underscore the urgent need for open and vigorous presentation of news and information, we need look no further than the recent polls showing that over 50% of respondents believed that Iraq was directly involved in the 9/11 attacks. No thinking person can pretend that further consolidation of media ownership will do anything but perpetuate such shameful ignorance of facts.

Without an active and open discussion of hard questions that comes only with diverse and competing media, we can expect to see further degeneration of critical public opinion. It may not be the task of media companies to educate the public. But it is the duty of the regulating commission to make decisions based on the public interest, not the exigencies of the private market interests.

History of course will determine the wisdom of the decisions made today, and reveal who acted responsibly and who did not. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,  
Steve McQuiddy